



TRAINING PLAN

Ironman: The Final Countdown

Reach the start line in peak condition, with this six-week plan from coaching editor **Phil Mosley**

Back in December (issue 62) we published an Ironman Winter Foundation training plan – and the six-week plan opposite follows on from it. Don't worry if you didn't catch it though. Providing you've spent the last 12 weeks gradually building up your Ironman training, this six-week plan will take you all the way through to race day. Well, almost. Let me explain.

This plan should be started seven weeks before your Ironman, because it doesn't include the final week of training. The last week involves so

many variables, such as travel and the facilities at your destination, that it's best to be flexible.

You may have your own ideas on what to do in the final week anyway. If not, between Monday and Thursday you could do half of the training you did the previous week. Then in the final days before the race take a couple of days off or just do 15-30mins of light training each day – whatever feels best for you.

Forget about what anyone else is doing. You won't lose fitness – your training is done and banked.

? IS THIS PLAN FOR YOU?

Goal
To reach the Ironman start line in peak condition

Timescale
6 weeks

Start Point
Cycle 80 miles
Run 18 miles
Swim 3km

Level
Intermediate to advanced

With seven weeks to go, the aim is to cement your confidence and ability to cover long distances at your approximate Ironman pace. If you can't do it in training, chances are you won't do it on race day. So set realistic expectations based on what you do in these key sessions. You should also use them as an opportunity to practise race-day nutrition and kit.

Aside from these key long sessions, the remainder of the training is designed to maintain your speed and fitness without leaving you too fatigued. If you need to take more rest, swap the days around. However, the long brick and run sessions will take 48 hours to recover from. It's important you allow yourself adequate time to recover. If you feel excessively tired, take it easy for a few days.

For simplicity's sake the swims are given as Main Set only. In addition you should incorporate a warm up of around 1,000m and a warm down of 500m. This should include front crawl, drills, backstroke and kicking. Attending a coached group is nearly always more effective than swimming alone. Please check out the Key and Training Zones sections on the left, so you know what the abbreviations mean and what intensities to train at.

6 WEEK PLAN TRAINING ZONES GUIDE

	DESCRIPTION	HEART RATE (%MAX)	RPE 1-10	ACCUMULATED	INTENSITY
21	Recovery	55-70	<2	1-6hrs	Easy
22	Endurance	70-75	2-3	1-3hrs	Steady
23	Tempo	75-80	3-4	50-90mins	Comfortable
24	Threshold	80-88	4-6	10-60mins	Uncomfortable
25	Vo ₂ max	89-100	>7	12-30mins	Hard to very hard

KEY

WU Warm up, MAIN Main set, WD Warm down, FC Front crawl, PULL Front crawl with a pull-buoy float between your thighs, KICK Kick with a float held out in front, SECS seconds, Z1 Training Zone 1, Z2 Training Zone 2, Z3 Training Zone 3, Z4 Training Zone 4, Z5 Training Zone 5, DRILL Your preference of swim technique drill, BUILD Do each rep slightly faster than the previous, BACK Backstroke, BREAST Breaststroke



	DAY		ESSENTIAL WORKOUT		OPTIONAL WORKOUT
WEEK 1	Mon	Swim (recovery)	MAIN 3x150m FC Z2 +10secs rests, 100m KICK Z4, 3x150m FC Z3 +15secs, 100m KICK Z2, 3x150m FC Z4 +30secs	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Tue	Bike (speed endurance)	WU 15mins in Z2, 5mins as (20secs in Z4, 40secs in Z2) MAIN 11, 10, 9mins all in Z4 + 3mins recoveries in Z1 WD 5mins in Z2		RECOVERY
	Wed	Run (endurance)	Run 20 miles at approx Ironman pace (Z2 to low Z3). Make terrain similar to race day. Practise your race nutrition	Stretch	Stretch after your run or attend yoga class
	Thur		RECOVERY	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Fri	Swim (endurance)	MAIN 2x250m FC as (100m Z2, 50m Z4, 100m Z2) +30secs rest, 4x150m FC as (50m Z2, 50m Z4, 50m Z2) +20secs, 4x100m FC as (25m Z2, 50m Z4, 25m Z2) +15secs	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 15mins sprinkle in 3x60secs in Z4 to Z5
	Sat	Brick	Bike 4hrs 30mins in Z2 to low Z3. Into Run 30mins in Z2 to low Z3. Consume 300 calories per hour		RECOVERY
	Sun	Swim (open water)	Swim 3km open water, in Z2		RECOVERY
WEEK 2	Mon	Swim (recovery)	MAIN 400m FC Z1, 100m KICK Z1 +60secs rest, 400m PULL Z2, 100m KICK Z1 +60secs rest, 400m FC Z3, 100m KICK Z1 +60secs rest, 400m PULL Z4, 100m KICK Z1	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Tue	Bike (speed endurance)	WU 10mins in Z2, 5mins as (20secs in Z4, 40secs in Z2) MAIN 6x5mins all in Z4 +2mins recoveries in Z1 WD 5mins in Z2		RECOVERY
	Wed	Run (endurance)	Run 18 miles at approx Ironman pace (Z2 to low Z3). Make terrain similar to race day. Practise your race nutrition	Stretch	Stretch after your run or attend yoga class
	Thur		RECOVERY	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Fri	Swim (endurance)	MAIN 300m FC Z4 +30secs rest, 2x200m PULL Z2 +20secs, 300m FC Z4 +30secs, 400m PULL Z2, 300m FC Z4 +30secs, 4x100m PULL Z2 +10secs	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 15mins sprinkle in 2x2mins in Z4
	Sat	Brick	Bike 4hrs in Z2 to low Z3. Into Run 60mins in Z2. Consume 300 calories per hour		RECOVERY
	Sun	Swim (open water)	Swim 3km open water, in Z2		RECOVERY
WEEK 3	Mon		RECOVERY		RECOVERY
	Tue	Bike	WU 10mins in Z2, 5mins as (20secs in Z4, 40secs in Z2) MAIN 3x5mins all in Z4 +2mins recoveries in Z1 WD 5mins in Z2		RECOVERY
	Wed	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 15mins build into doing 3mins in Z4	Stretch	Stretch after your run or attend yoga class
	Thur	Swim	MAIN 5x200m FC in Z3 + 30secs rests	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Fri	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 15mins sprinkle in 2x2mins in Z4		RECOVERY
	Sat	Bike	Ride 2hrs in Z2 to Z3. Optional cafe stop		RECOVERY
	Sun	Swim (open water)	Swim 2.5km open water in Z2		RECOVERY



DAY		ESSENTIAL WORKOUT		OPTIONAL WORKOUT	
WEEK 4	Mon	Swim (endurance)	MAIN 200m FC Z1 +20 secs, 300m PULL Z2 +30secs, 400m FC Z3 +40secs, 500m PULL Z4 +50 secs, 400m FC Z3 +40secs, 300m PULL Z2 +30secs, 200m FC Z1	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Tue	Bike (speed endurance)	WU 10mins in Z2, 5mins as (20secs in Z4, 40secs in Z2) MAIN 5, 6, 7, 6, 5mins all in Z4 +3mins recoveries in Z1 WD 5mins in Z2	RECOVERY	
	Wed	Run (endurance)	Run 22 miles at approx Ironman pace (Z2 to low Z3). Make terrain similar to race day. Practise your race nutrition	Stretch	Stretch after your run or attend yoga class
	Thur	RECOVERY		Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Fri	Swim (recovery)	MAIN 800m Z2 alternating (100m FC/100m PULL)	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 20mins build into a 4mins effort in Z4
	Sat	Brick	Bike 100 miles in Z2 to low Z3. Into Run 6 miles in Z2 to low Z3. Consume 300 calories per hour	RECOVERY	
	Sun	Swim (open water)	Swim 3.5km open water in Z2	RECOVERY	
WEEK 5	Mon	Swim (recovery)	MAIN 3x(100m KICK in Z3 +15secs, 100m FC BUILD +15secs)	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Tue	Bike (speed endurance)	WU 10mins in Z2, 5mins as (20secs in Z4, 40secs in Z2) MAIN 3x10mins all in Z4 +5mins recoveries in Z2 WD 5mins in Z2	RECOVERY	
	Wed	Run (endurance)	Run 20 miles at approx Ironman pace (Z2 to low Z3). Make terrain similar to race day. Practise your race nutrition	Stretch	Stretch after your run or attend yoga class
	Thur	RECOVERY		Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Fri	Swim (endurance)	MAIN 400m FC Z2 +30secs rest, 4x100m PULL Z4 +30secs, 300m FC Z2 +20secs, 3x100m PULL Z4 +30secs, 200m FC Z2 +10secs, 2x100m FC Z4 +30secs, 100m FC Z2 +10secs, 100m PULL Z4	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 15mins sprinkle in 2x60secs in Z4
	Sat	Bike to Run	Bike 4hrs in Z2 to low Z3. Into Run 13 miles in Z2. Consume 300 calories per hour	RECOVERY	
	Sun	Swim (open water)	Swim 3.8km open water in Z1/Z2	RECOVERY	
WEEK 6	Mon	RECOVERY		RECOVERY	
	Tue	Swim	1500m Z1 pool or open water	RECOVERY	
	Wed	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 15mins sprinkle in 3x60secs in Z4	Stretch	Stretch after your run or attend yoga class
	Thur	Bike	WU 10mins in Z2, 5mins as (20secs Z4, 40secs Z2) MAIN 2x5mins in Z4 +5mins rests in Z1 WD 5mins in Z2	Core stability	Pilates class or home core-stability workout
	Fri	Run	Run mainly in Z2 but after 15mins sprinkle in 2x2mins in Z4	RECOVERY	
	Sat	Bike	Ride 2hrs in Z2 to Z3. Optional cafe stop	RECOVERY	
	Sun	Swim (open water)	Swim 2km open water in Z2	RECOVERY	